

Appendix A

Glossary of Terms

Administrative Order

Formal enforcement actions issued by EPA or a State to address noncompliance at a public water system, usually by means of a compliance schedule with enforceable milestone dates.

Chemical Rules

Refers collectively to regulations that protect the public from unsafe levels of organic chemicals, inorganic chemicals (other than lead and copper), and radioactivity in drinking water.

Community Water System

A public water system that serves at least 15 service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least 25 year-round residents (e.g., homes, apartments and condominiums that are occupied year-round as primary residences).

Federally-recognized Indian Tribe

An Indian tribe, band, nation, pueblo, community, or Alaska Native Village that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. Section 479a. Maintained by the Department of the Interior, the list of federally-recognized tribes is updated periodically and published in the Federal Register. The latest list of federally-recognized Indian tribes is available at 65 Federal Register 12398 (March 13, 2000).

Health-based Violation

A violation of either a Maximum Contaminant Level or a Treatment Technique requirement.

Inorganic Chemicals

These non-carbon based compounds (such as metals, nitrates, and asbestos) can either occur naturally in some sources of drinking water or be introduced by human activity. EPA has established MCLs for 15 inorganic contaminants. Violations of standards for lead and copper are addressed separately.

Large System

A public water system that serves more than 10,000 people.

Lead and Copper Rule

Requires a public water system to take steps to minimize the risk of exposure to lead and copper in drinking water by monitoring for these contaminants, installing corrosion control where

required, and, where necessary, educating the public about ways to reduce exposure. A system may also be required to treat its source water or replace lead service lines.

Maximum Contaminant Level

The maximum permissible level of a contaminant in water delivered to any user of a public water system.

Monitoring and Reporting Violation

Refers to either a violation of a monitoring and reporting schedule or violation of contaminant-specific minimum testing schedules and operational reporting requirements. Those monitoring and reporting violations considered “significant” for the purposes of the State and national public water system compliance reports are described below in Table A-1.

Nitrate and Nitrite

Inorganic compounds that can enter water supplies, primarily from fertilizer runoff and sanitary wastewater discharges.

Non-transient Non-community Water System

A non-community public water system that regularly serves at least 25 of the same persons over six months per year. A typical example of a non-transient non-community water system is a school or an office building that has its own water source, such as a drinking water well.

Organic Chemicals

These carbon-based compounds, such as solvents and pesticides, can enter drinking water through a variety of means, including factory discharges or runoff from crop lands. EPA has established MCLs for 56 organic contaminants.

Primacy

The Safe Drinking Water Act requires EPA, States, and Tribes to work as partners to ensure delivery of safe drinking water to the public. Any State or Indian Tribe can request responsibility for operation and oversight of the drinking water program within its borders. In order to receive this responsibility (called “primary enforcement authority” or “primacy”), a State or Tribe must show, among other things, that it has adopted drinking water regulations that are at least as stringent as Federal regulations, and demonstrate its capacity both to enforce those regulations and to implement other activities necessary to ensure compliance.

In the absence of State or Tribal primacy, EPA assumes responsibility for administering the drinking water program for that area. Of the 56 eligible States (defined to include Commonwealths, Territories, and the District of Columbia), all but Wyoming and the District of Columbia have primacy. EPA Regional Offices administer the drinking water program within these two jurisdictions and on all Tribal lands.

Public Water System

A system for the provision to the public of water for human consumption through pipes or other constructed conveyances, if such system has at least fifteen service connections or regularly serves at least twenty-five individuals at least 60 days out of the year. A public water system can be either a community water system, a non-transient non-community water system, or a transient non-community water system.

Radionuclides

Radioactive particles, such as radium-226, radium-228, gross alpha, and beta particle/photon radioactivity, can occur naturally in water or may result from human activity. EPA has established MCLs for beta/photon emitters, alpha emitters, and combined radium 226/228.

Regional Offices

Responsible for implementing Environmental Protection Agency programs within their respective jurisdictions. Regional Offices cooperate with Federal, State, interstate, and local agencies, as well as with industry, academic institutions, and other private groups to ensure that Regional needs are addressed and that Federal environmental laws are upheld.

Small Systems

Public water systems that serve no more than 3,300 people.

Surface Water Treatment Rule

The Surface Water Treatment Rule (SWTR) requires a public water system served by surface water or by ground water under the influence of surface water to take steps (such as disinfection, filtration followed by disinfection, or watershed control) to reduce potential exposure to microbiological contamination.

Total Coliform Rule

Establishes limits on coliform bacteria in water distribution systems. Although coliform bacteria, which are found in decaying organic material and

in the intestinal tract of humans and animals, are usually not harmful to human health, their presence may indicate the presence of other, more dangerous microbial contamination.

SDWIS/FED

EPA's database for collecting safe drinking water monitoring results from oversight agencies. SDWIS stands for Safe Drinking Water Information System. Public Water Systems are required to report all monitoring results to the primary enforcement authority. States with primacy, or EPA where it administers the program, analyze the monitoring results, determine compliance, and report violations to EPA on a quarterly basis. EPA maintains records of these violations in SDWIS/FED. SDWIS/FED records only violations, not results that demonstrate compliance with drinking water standards.

Total Trihalomethanes

These chemicals can be by-products of chemical processes used to disinfect drinking water.

Transient Non-community Water System

A non-community water system that regularly serves at least 25 people (but not the same 25) over six months per year. A typical example is a campground or a highway rest stop that has its own water source, such as a drinking water well.

Treatment Technique

In cases where EPA has determined it is not technically or economically feasible to establish an MCL, the Agency can instead specify a treatment technique. These are treatment methods required by EPA to minimize the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

Variances and Exemptions

A public water system that cannot comply with a drinking water standard because of poor source water quality, or, in the case of small systems, inadequate financial resources, can be granted a variance to comply with less stringent, but still protective standards based on a specific EPA-approved technology available to the system. An exemption allows a PWS with compelling circumstances (including economic considerations) additional time to achieve compliance with applicable SDWA requirements, so long as public health is adequately protected.

**TABLE A-1: SIGNIFICANT MONITORING VIOLATIONS FOR
ANNUAL STATE PUBLIC WATER SYSTEM REPORTS**

Rule		Violation Type	Description	SDWIS Violation Code ¹	SDWIS Contaminant Code
Total Coliform Rule		Major routine	No samples collected during a compliance period	23	3100
		Major repeat	No follow-up samples collected after a positive total coliform sample or no speciation	25	3100
Surface Water Treatment Rule		Major (filtered)	Collected less than 90% of samples required during a compliance period	31	None
		Major (unfiltered)	Collected less than 90% of samples required during a compliance period	36	None
Lead and Copper Rule		Initial lead and copper tap	Either failed to collect the initial tap samples, and then failed to correct that omission within a) 3 months for large systems, b) 6 months for medium systems, or c) 12 months for small systems; or failed to submit the associated report	51	
		Follow-up or routine lead and copper tap	Failed to collect 1 or more required samples	52	
Chlorine	Phase I, II, IIB, and V Rules	Regular monitoring	Failed to collect any required samples ²	By contaminant	
	Total Trihalomethanes	Regular monitoring	Failed to collect any required samples	03	2950
	Radionuclides	Regular monitoring	Failed to collect any required samples	03	4000, 4101, 4010

1 EPA's Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS/FED) makes no distinction between the sampling violations and the reporting violations associated with a sample collection requirement. Both violations are reported under the same violation code.

2 Failure to collect "any required samples" means none of the required samples were collected.

**TABLE A-2: SUMMARY OF DRINKING WATER REGULATIONS FOR
PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS DURING 1998**

Applicability of Regulations			
Contaminant/Rule	Community Water Systems	Non-transient Non-Community Water Systems	Transient Non-Community Water Systems
Organic Contaminants	All	All	Some (Only epichlorohydrin and acrylamide)
Total Trihalomethanes (TTHM)	Some (Only systems serving more than 10,000)	None	None
Inorganic Contaminants	All	Some (All except arsenic and fluoride)	None
Nitrate and Nitrite	All	All	All
Radionuclides	All	None	None
Total Coliform	All	All	All
Surface Water Treatment	Some (Only PWSs using surface water sources or ground water sources under the direct influence of surface water)	Some (Only PWSs using surface water sources or ground water sources under the direct influence of surface water)	Some (Only PWSs using surface water sources or ground water sources under the direct influence of surface water)
Lead and Copper	All	All	None